



so-journ *noun* \sō-jərn, sō-\

Definition of SOJOURN

: a temporary stay

Sojourn House

A Program of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board

“(Sojourn House) was my home and a safe, nurturing place that accepted me for who I was and helped me during a difficult time.”

– Program Participant

Sojourn House is an 8 bed community-based therapeutic group home for girls ages 12 through 17 who have significant mental health problems or co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders. These complex issues are often impacted by history of trauma, abuse and neglect. The magnitude of these concerns is such that they are often best addressed in a structured residential setting with 24-hour supports, until the girls can successfully reconnect with their families and community.

Located in Fairfax County, Sojourn House is the only program in our community that serves girls with this high level of acuity. The program serves from 15 to 20 girls each year, and the typical length of stay ranges from 90 days to 6 months. Sojourn House has a school on site, operated by Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). Girls in the program can also return to regular school classes as appropriate.

Sojourn House is a Medicaid Level-B Therapeutic Group Home provider. The staff utilizes **evidence-based approaches** including trauma-informed care, cognitive behavioral therapy, and Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS). The emphasis is on raising the girls’ level of independent functioning so that they can transition successfully to less restrictive, more normalized settings. As a measure of effectiveness, 80% of program graduates make this transition successfully.

The girls at Sojourn House are viewed as capable of maturing, healing and learning to cope more effectively with life’s difficulties. The program also works with their families (including foster families). Due to the 24 hour nature of the program, youth receive real time therapeutic assistance when experiencing stressors, trauma triggers and life events. Real-time therapeutic intervention promotes skill integration, family reunification, and long-term community success.

Licensed and professional staff provides individualized treatment that includes:

- assessment and diagnosis
- one-on-one therapy
- group counseling
- reunification planning and skill building
- real-time therapeutic supports 24 hours per day
- family therapy
- case management
- on-site psychiatric assessment and treatment
- medication monitoring
- peer support and social skills training
- emotional regulation training
- crisis prevention/intervention
- recreation and leisure activities
- substance abuse psychoeducation and treatment

**Call Sojourn House
at 703-691-1685,
TTY 711.**

*Sojourn House is a Medicaid Level-B Therapeutic Group Home provider
and is accredited by CARF, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.*





Sojourn House staff collaborates daily with on-site FCPS teachers to enhance educational outcomes and provide the therapeutic support and direct monitoring necessary for school attendance and advancement.

Sojourn House offers two tracks of programming based on the child's needs, current family situation and recommendations of other departments and agencies working with the child. The first track has an estimated length of stay of 90 days, and the second track has an estimated length of stay of 6 to 9 months. All services are individualized. Strong collaboration and joint treatment planning are cornerstones of the program.

90 Day Track – Family Recovery and Reunification

The 90-day track focuses on family integration, skill building and recovery planning. These services are designed to meet the needs of families who are planning for reunification after the child's return from an out of home treatment episode as well as families who are experiencing ongoing difficulty and crisis, even with community supports.

For families who are planning for reunification:

When a child returns to the family after an out of home treatment episode, the transition from occasional visits to 24-hour contact can be problematic without support and planning. The "planned therapeutic reunification" program offered by Sojourn House includes the following services:

- Development (with the family) of an individualized therapeutic family reunification plan.
- Incremental and planned increase from visitation to full family reunification.
- Visits incorporating family goals and skill building.
- Support and therapeutic review before and after visits.
- Development (with the family) of a wellness, recovery and crisis plan that includes:
 - ◆ A family contract with rules, stipulations and agreed upon consequences.
 - ◆ A plan for therapeutic interventions to be used if symptoms increase or crisis occurs.
 - ◆ Communication strategies, individualized for each family, to help ameliorate stressful situations and conflict.
- Support and therapy, as needed, after reunification.

6 Month Track – Therapeutic Residential Services

For families who are experiencing ongoing difficulty and crisis, even with supports:

At times, youth in the community and their family or foster family continue to experience ongoing difficulty and crisis, even with community support. The cycle of family crisis increases trauma and maladaptive behavioral responses. The six month programming provides holistic community based interventions and offers girls and their families increased opportunities for skill building and trauma informed therapeutic services.